

The Redwood Log

Staff Newsletter



Muir Woods National Monument | Fall/Winter 2008

In This Issue:

- § Muirly Mia's Musings..... *page 2*
- § More Than Just a
Seasonal Change..... *page 3*
- § Wonderful World of Web..... *page 3*
- § Tree Measuring..... *page 3*
- § Redwooducation..... *page 4*
- § Creature Feature..... *page 5*
- § ... Our Family Circle..... *pages 6-10*
- § Words of Woods Wisdom... *page 11*
- § Thanks to Volunteers..... *page 12*

Muirly Mia's Musings

by Mia Monroe

The old saying "the more things change the more things stay the same"...could hold especially true in a redwood forest...we've had so many staff changes, office re-arrangements, now a new concession, plenty of wonderful new stuff in VC, yet we're also witnessing a beautiful fall, the return of the Curly Bark Classroom, the start of another school season, a seasonal crew again and hopefully the spawning salmon soon. Ahhh, how renewing the cycle of the seasons as played out in a national park can be!

Our Centennial year soon comes to a close officially on Winter Solstice, but I'm sure we'll continue to celebrate for quite a while as the publications debut, Big Lagoon restores, Quiet Zone signs are installed and Fern Creek re-opens...in case you're curious, the final count-down of events/products has been:

15. NPS - Park Partner Symposium (a great success...thank you Chris, Mike and Matthew!),
14. Metal water bottle for sale in Visitor Center
13. Curly Bark Classroom re-opens (hurray Trail Crew!),
12. Kent Society visits
11. VIA features Muir Woods
10. Muir Woods shuttle receives MTC award of merit
9. Measure redwoods (WOW, Lou, Robert we await the results!)
8. Muir Woods Meditations book printed
7. Redwood Refuge reprinted
6. Cultural self-guide printed
5. parking lot donated (keep your fingers crossed!)
4. Fern Creek Trail re-opens (Solange is our liaison, hopefully this winter it will happen!)
3. Winter Solstice
2. Big Lagoon restored
1. Friends of Muir Woods formed

....what didn't happen? Well, we had hoped to rethink Pinchot Tree Grove and Cathedral Grove...let's hope that they recover health and visitor flow/experience improves in the next century! Will fire return? Maybe! What is your wish for the future?

Thanks to each of you for being a strong and positive part of the team...I hear, in so many ways, how productive each of you are, what a difference you are each making ...the NPS is proud to have such representatives and I'm sure the forest is a better place thanks to your care and attention...may the redwoods continue to inspire you in the new year.

More Than Just a Seasonal Change

by Sarah Koenen

Ranger Bob Holloway, at the Marin Headlands, will be changing his work assignment to the Cultural Resources Division at Fort Mason for a year-long detail. Ranger Sarah after finally getting back to fulltime work in the Woods will be once again disappearing. She will be back-filling Ranger Bob's position in the Headlands. However, she will continue to come to the woods one day a week until someone is hired to backfill her position. So sadly Sarah says "So Long – Woodsies." But she doesn't say good-bye as she will still visit the woods – or you can come on out to the Headlands for a visit!

Wonderful World of the Web

by Sarah Koenen

Check out the Muir Woods website at <http://www.nps.gov/muwo> today to learn more about the park's natural and cultural history!

Click on "History and Culture" and you can view a synopsis of the Proclamation creating Muir Woods National Monument .

Visit "For Kids" and download your very own copy of the Jr Ranger or Quest booklets.

Explore "Nature and Science" to learn about Spotted Owls and more!

Tree Measuring

If you haven't met Stephen Skartvedt, NPS GIS specialist, in the Woods lately, then you're missing out. He's one of the nicest people you'll ever meet and so willing to share his knowledge about map making and the world of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Stephen is making a map of Muir Woods for the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy for a new cultural guide that will be published in the near future.

Relying on his well-mapped network of spatial coordinates, Ranger Lou is determining how accurately a redwood tree can be measured with land surveying equipment – the total station Stephen is using – and with a compass traverse method using an inclinometer, measuring tape, compass and geometry. She hopes to have her results analyzed by a U.S. Department of Forestry scientist in Alaska.

Oh yes, she'll also get the height of the tree --so stay tuned!

NOT TO MISS!

Winter Solstice

December 21st
3:00-8:00 p.m.

Muir Woods Earth Day

February 7th
8:00-1:00 p.m.

Fungi of Muir Woods

January 10th
10:00-1:00 p.m.

Centennial History Walk

January 10th
9:00-12:00 noon

Winter in the Woods

January 17th
10:00-1:00 p.m.

Watershed Hike

February 14th
10:00-2:00 p.m.

Redwooducation

by Tim Jordan

When Ranger Jim left for Louisiana, I moved into his shoes as education ranger at Muir Woods. The park's education program, *Into the Redwood Forest* is extremely popular for Bay Area elementary schools. For this school year alone Muir Woods received over seventy applications!

This year, Muir Woods was fortunate enough to have funding to provide 45 transportation scholarships to Bay Area schools. This pays for bus service to and from Muir Woods for one third-grade class. This year, our bus provider uses biodiesel buses and works primarily to transport students on environmental education field trips. You can learn more about our bus provider at www.teacherwiththebus.com.

Muir Woods was also able to hire on a seasonal ranger, Joseph Ritchie, to help give the program. As well, Education intern, Holly Bailey, is also supporting the program. This team has already given fifteen programs to a total of about 375 elementary students!

Into the Redwood Forest is geared to a third through fifth grade audience. The program features a visit to the classroom by a ranger to orient them to the woods through a quick interactive PowerPoint presentation featuring sounds and videos. Next, the class visits Muir Woods for a three hour program later in the week. While at Muir Woods they explore the redwood forest using their five senses. The goal of the program is to teach young students that many plants and animals are dependent on redwood forest for survival. Also infused are lessons about protection and stewardship. Participants also get to have an amazingly positive nature experience at a young age -- something the urban youth is in need of more and more.

If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more about participating in the Muir Woods education program please contact Ranger Tim Jordan at the Muir Woods administration office.



“Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.”

Interpreting Our Heritage, Freeman Tilden

Creature Feature

by Suzanne Garcia

Now that the fall rains have finally arrived here at Muir Woods, the damp conditions are perfect for a very special critter that makes its home in the monument and other redwood forests. This lumbering giant (of its kind) can frequently be found in and around the cool, clear waters of Redwood and Fern Creeks. It can also be found foraging along roads and pathways on rainy nights. It likes to make its home under rotting logs and among the wet leaf litter that carpets the forest floor. This critter can grow to be over one foot long (30 cm) and has been known to munch on a variety of foods from banana slugs to lizards to even small rodents.

When threatened, this species produces a bark, though the sound is a far cry from that of a coyote or dog. Their camouflaged coloring helps them to blend into the marbled background of the creek. This time of year, you may be lucky to spy creatures as they emerge to find mates, a ritual performed each fall and spring. As winter rains intensify and water levels rise in the creeks, last year's larvae will hatch from shallow pools, but may not transform for several years. Even after they metamorphose, some adults will retain the physical characteristics of larvae, through a phenomenon called paedomorphosis. For example, in this species, some adults will keep their gills and swimming tails.

What is this giant that roves the forest floor? It is none other than the California Giant Salamander (*Dicamptodon ensatus*). The California Giant Salamander is one of the largest terrestrial salamanders found in North America. Its cousin, the Coastal Giant Salamander, roams further north -- in the realm of Redwood National and State Parks. The slow-flowing streams and rotting logs of Muir Woods provide excellent habitat for this species. As you walk through Muir Woods take a peek into Redwood Creek from one of our bridges and you may find the California Giant Salamander.



Pacific Giant Salamander (*Dicamptodon tenebrosus*)

Photo Credit: James Bettaso
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

New Trees to Our Family Circle

Robert Dickinson

My trek to Muir Woods has been one full of numerous twists and turns not the least of which was relocating from the East Coast - and most of it in parallel with a business career.

From a corner office high in a Manhattan skyscraper, a scant four blocks from where the World Trade Towers once stood and over looking Upper New York harbor and the Statue of Liberty, to the Australian Outback and capital city ports of the World -- Scandinavia, Europe, Asia, and the Indian sub-continent -- my life experiences have influenced my visitor engagement conduct and approach to interpretation.

Relocating without the family caused many idle weekends until I visited Muir Woods. The volunteer staffing the tiny kiosk was anxious to have me complete a Volunteer Application and give me the telephone number of a ranger named Mia Monroe.

Shortly thereafter Mia organized a training program for all volunteers -- I recall having 6-8 people in attendance -- and insisted on our participation of three days a month. The next phase was my application for a seasonal appointment, which ultimately led to an intermittent status. I left MUWO and for the next 20 years served at SAFR (San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park), on much the same arrangement.

Most recently, I've returned to my roots - the roots! Muir Woods.



New Trees to Our Family Circle (continued)

Lou Sian

There is a redwood tree near the entrance arch of Muir Woods that some call the Magellan Tree. It reminds me of the many connections in Muir Woods to world history and my heritage as a Pacific Islander. The tree was 300 years old when Ferdinand Magellan sailed from Spain in 1519 and eventually circumnavigated the world. Midway on his voyage and nearly out of provisions, Magellan sailed into Umatac Bay on the southern coast of Guam in 1521. So small an island, yet so strategic in the control of the Pacific, Guam was declared a Spanish colony in 1565. It served as a way station for Spain's lucrative Manila-Acapulco trade route that lasted 250 years.

The Department of Interior, which oversees Guam, says on its website that the island was ceded to the United States in 1898 after the Spanish American War. Such a momentous war, it elevated the United States as a world power and propelled Theodore Roosevelt into the presidency in 1901.

Last summer, I visited my parents who retired on Guam. We went to the old cemetery where my ancestor, a Spanish soldier is presumed to be buried. The War in the Pacific National Historical Park was celebrating its 30th anniversary, and we went on a special tour of the park and learned about the Battle of Guam during WWII. Today, the scars of battle in the ocean are grown over with coral and on the land by jungle. I think the people have healed also, if agony and deep sorrow can be healed. Many Japanese visit Guam or call it their home, including my mother. We saw the bronze plaque listing all the names of the people – Guamanian, American, and Japanese – who suffered during World War II. My father's name is on the plaque, and he wept to see it. As a child, he and his family were rounded up by the Japanese and kept in concentration camps. In an odd twist of fate, the camps served as both a prison and a shelter from the battle. As the only United States property to be occupied by the enemy, Americans fought hard to retake it from the Japanese.

The United Nations lists Guam as one of the 16 places in the world ruled by a foreign power and has called for the end of colonialism and for these "non-self-governing territories" to achieve home-rule by 2010. If given a choice, I think most Guamanians would live and die as Americans as evidenced by the 29 flag poles that are erected in front of the Guam International Airport in honor of the young men and women who died in the War in Iraq. By far, Guamanians are disproportionately represented in the armed forces per capita than any other state in the Union. My father like so many of the island's young people joined the military and left the island.

Because we lived in so many places during my father's career in the U.S. Army, I don't feel particularly rooted to any one place. But the redwood trees give me pause to reflect on my heritage and the forces that tie us together as a people of the United States. I see how these ancient trees give us a perspective for the passing of time beyond our own meager life span. I'm sure every person who visits Muir Woods feels their own connection to world events in relation to the longevity of this old growth forest. May it thrive forever.



New Trees to Our Family Circle (continued)

Valsala Manaloor



I joined the staff at Muir Woods this summer as a seasonal ranger for the Visitor and Resource Protection Division of GGNRA. I recently completed my MS in Geography at Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. While in college, I worked as a teaching assistant and had an internship at a state-owned historic grist mill called Thompson's Mills. Prior to that I worked for four years as Ranger's Aide with California State Parks at sites such as Prairie Creek and Salt Point, and a summer as Activities Coordinator at Detroit Lake State Park in Oregon.

I grew up in Malaysia, but spent most of my adult life in Humboldt County, CA, where I developed my love of the redwoods. I completed my undergraduate degree at Humboldt State University in Wildlife Management, and continued with graduate courses in Natural Resources Planning and Interpretation.

I'm an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hiking, backpacking and canoeing. I have a strong interest in animal welfare and worked and volunteered for various animal shelters, veterinarians, parks and organizations like The Nature Conservancy and Humboldt Wildlife Care Center. I have two dogs that I love a great deal – Boston, a smooth-coated border collie, and Sophie, a black lab-border collie mix.

Finally, I am an accomplished musician and have spent over fifteen years performing Balkan music with groups such as Bigfoot, Chubritsa and Kefi in Humboldt County. I am thrilled to be in Marin County with so much exploring to do!

Hi! Joseph Carr Ritchie here, also known as Ranger Ritchie. Once upon a time, I had a dead-end job in the arid East Bay delivering PVC pipe and tons of toxic fertilizer to lawns so green I needed sunglasses to shield my eyes. I realized that I needed to do something else with my life, and when I found myself seeking solace in Oakland's Redwood Regional Park, life started to make sense: I had made my happiest memories in parks.

From childhood camping trips in the north woods of my native Wisconsin, to my first glimpse of the ocean as a teenager at Muir Beach, to my first view of big trees at Calaveras Big Trees State Park, to my first sight of redwoods at Muir Woods, I had parks to thank for the best times in my life. I needed a career change. I moved to Alameda and began my career in interpretation at the East Bay Regional Park District's Crab Cove Visitor Center, continued first as a volunteer and then as a ranger at Redwood National and State Parks while finishing my bachelor's degree at Humboldt State University, canoed kids around San Francisco Bay for Save the Bay after graduating, and tramped the lighthouse steps and San Andreas Fault for a summer at Point Reyes National Seashore before starting as an educator and interpreter at Muir Woods in September. Along with Holly, I assist Tim with our "Into the Redwood Forest" school programs and provide additional support for the interpretive division.

I live around the mountain on one of Forest Knolls eponymous little hills with my two-year-old son, Jack, and my Siamese-Tabby cat, Lyra.

Joseph Ritchie



New Trees to Our Family Circle (continued)



Ryan Mayeda

My name is Ryan Mayeda. I was born in Los Angeles and I grew up in Culver City. As I was growing up, I would go on family trips to various places every summer. The one place that remains vivid in my memory is Yosemite National Park. My family would always rent out a cabin near a river where we walked along and went swimming in. Unfortunately, I could not go on the more strenuous hikes with my father, uncles and grandfather because of my young age. For instance, one of the hikes I wish I could have gone on is to the top of Half Dome. The giant sequoias and breathtaking scenery took me aback when I used to visit Yosemite even at such a young age.

Those trips to Yosemite and the science topics my teachers covered through high school brought me to the University of California- Santa Cruz with the plan to study the biological sciences. My emphasis eventually leaned towards the marine environment and as a result, I received a Bachelor of Sciences degree in marine biology this past June (2008). While attending UCSC, I became very interested in many aspects of marine biology. For instance, I worked at a marine mammal research lab at Long Marine Lab as well as conducting scientific research projects while SCUBA diving. During my collegiate career I also studied abroad in Brisbane, Australia at the University of Queensland. While there I took courses in terrestrial ecology and marine biology. My interests in terrestrial ecosystems grew while studying in Australia. My various experiences in the biological and physical sciences has given me a good foundation for my current position as an Interpretative Park Ranger at Muir Woods National Monument as well as the Marin Headlands.

My name is Suzanne Garcia. I grew up in the south bay town of Los Altos, where I spent the majority of my childhood playing in mud with my three brothers. I am a native of Northern California and have been fortunate enough to grow up around redwood trees. My brothers and I even built a tree house in the large redwood that grows in front of our parents' house. During the summer we would even sleep in our tree house. The house is still there, though it has since been taken over by squirrels.

I have always had a strong interest in science. After high school I went on to Study at the University of California, Santa Cruz and obtained a BS in Biology. During college, I spent four years working in a biological oceanography lab studying toxic algae under Mary Silver. It was because of Mary's influence that I developed a keen interest in public outreach and education about our natural resources. So naturally, when I graduated this past spring and saw a job opening for the National Park Service, I jumped at the opportunity. Here at the GGNRA I pitch in on occasion at Muir Woods, but my primary detail is helping to run a geology program at the Marin Headlands.

Work aside, some of my other interests include: playing guitar, camping, horseback riding and walking our three dogs. I absolutely love to ski and cannot wait until the first real snow storms to arrive. All in all I am very excited to be working with the National Park Service and very thankful for the time I get to spend in these wonderful woods.

Suzanne Garcia



New Trees to Our Family Circle (continued)

Holly Bailey

My name is Holly Bailey and I'm from Santa Rosa, California. I have not lived in California for the past five years however and am very happy to return to Northern California. Most recently I was living in Georgia for the summer working for Habitat for Humanity International, sweating profusely and experiencing southern hospitality. Before that I was residing on one of the San Juan Islands off of Washington and working at an Outdoor School wondering if it would ever stop raining. Prior to working in Washington I was participating with AmeriCorps while living in Tucson, Arizona and working in the disaster preparedness and planning field.

I went to college at Humboldt State University and transferred to Southern Oregon University where I majored in Criminology and minored in Sociology. Additionally I went to photography school in Montana and Paris (strange I know, two of the most opposite places to study photography) and worked with Conservation Volunteers in Australia for six months. In case there was any confusion about my background: one of my major interests is traveling and seeing new places/experiencing new things.

I am extremely passionate about conservation and environmental education and love to teach young kids about the importance of nature by giving them the opportunity to experience it first hand. I believe one of the most important steps in creating a more conservation minded society is educating future generations about their environment while experiencing the outdoors in an enjoyable and interesting way.



Matthew Evinger

Matthew Evinger is the new and well-meaning intern at Redwood Creek Nursery, playing Lenny to Chris Friedel's George. He is tall and has a great big bushy beard. Another identifying mark is the little koala that rides everywhere with him on the back of his bike. Matthew grew up in upstate New York, went to college in New York City, built trails with teenagers in the forests of the Northwest, delivered packages by bicycle in San Francisco, then tricked Chris into hiring him at the nursery in September. The reasons he gave were to learn all he can about one watershed, about growing plants, about restoration, about all the other questions he should be asking about the world, and about how many places in this world one volunteer announcement can be posted to.

Here's one more: come volunteer at the nursery (right next to Muir Woods!) any Wednesday or Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm!



Words of Woods Wisdom

compiled by Tim Jordan

There are those who say that trees shade the garden too much, and interfere with the growth of the vegetables. There may be something in this: but when I go down the potato rows, the rays of the sun glancing upon my shining blade, the sweat pouring down my face, I should be grateful for shade.

- *Charles Dudley Warner*

It is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of air that emanates from old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit.

- *Robert Louis Stevenson*

If what I say resonates with you, it is merely because we are both branches on the same tree.

- *W. B. Yeats*

... every tree near our house had a name of its own and a special identity. This was the beginning of my love for natural things, for earth and sky, for roads and fields and woods, for trees and grass and flowers; a love which has been second only to my sense of enduring kinship with birds and animals, and all inarticulate creatures.

- *Ellen Glasgow (1874-1945)*

Trees have from time immemorial been closely associated with magic. These stout members of the vegetable kingdom may stand for as long as a thousand years, and tower far above our mortal heads. As such they are symbols and keepers of unlimited power, longevity, and timelessness. An untouched forest, studded with trees of all ages, sizes and types, is more than a mysterious, magical place - it is one of the energy reservoirs of nature. Within its boundaries stand ancient and new sentinels, guardians of the universal force which has manifested on the the Earth ...

- *Scott Cunningham*

The best friend of earth of man is the tree. When we use the tree respectfully and economically, we have one of the greatest resources on the earth.

- *Frank Lloyd Wright*

We must protect the forests for our children, grandchildren and children yet to be born. We must protect the forests for those who can't speak for themselves such as the birds, animals, fish and trees.

- *Chief Edward Moody, Qwatsinas, Nuxalk Nation*

Today I have grown taller from walking with the trees.

- *Karle Wilson Baker*

Thanks to Our Muir Volunteers

by Tim Jordan

The Muir Woods Centennial is almost over! Thanks to our dedicated family of volunteers Muir Woods has been able to offer interpretive services throughout this special year. But just because the year is ending doesn't mean we need to lose momentum. Let's start the 101st year with the same amount of dedication to our work as we have displayed in during the Centennial Year.

Winters might be a slow wet time at the woods, but that's no reason not to come out! Attend someone else's program, develop a new program of your own, brush up on your knowledge of the park, see the mushrooms and the salmon, or help floss the boardwalks that are flooding with the first drops of that desperately needed rain. Even though the crowds aren't as large as in the summertime, the park still needs your support.



Do you know someone who would like to volunteer at Muir Woods? If so, tell them to call the Muir Woods administration office at (415) 388 - 2596 for details on becoming a park volunteer.

If you have comments, suggestions, or would like to submit an article for the next edition of the Redwood Log, Please contact the editor, Timothy Jordan at: Timothy_Jordan@nps.gov

